CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is the following:

1. A space-saving scanner assembly, comprising:

a housing having a substantially vertical source-contact surface with a channel extending therefrom; and

a flap coupled to the source-contact surface, the flap having a source-backing surface substantially parallel to the source-contact surface of the housing, wherein the source-contact surface, the source-backing surface, and the channel form an opening for receiving an edge of a source to be scanned.

2. The assembly of claim 1, wherein a portion of the vertical source-contact surface of the housing comprises a platen to permit scanning of a source document in a vertical position.

3. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the housing contains a front panel with an inclined surface adjacent to the opening, the inclined surface forming a wider opening at the surface of the front panel.

4. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the flap includes an inclined surface adjacent to the opening, the inclined surface arranged to increase the opening along a front edge of the flap, wherein the front edge is substantially perpendicular to the source-backing surface.

5. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the flap includes a slot.

6. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the flap includes a clip arranged to receive a portion of a source to be scanned.

7. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the housing further comprises a recess configured to receive a portion of the channel when the source-backing surface is in close proximity to the source-contact surface.

8. The assembly of claim 2, wherein the platen has an upper edge, an opposing lower edge, a front edge relatively coexistent with a front panel of the housing and a distal edge and wherein the channel is adjacent to the lower edge of the platen.

9. The assembly of claim 8, wherein the channel has a first end proximal to a front panel of the housing and a distal end that extends at least to the distal edge of the platen.

10. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the flap is coupled to the housing with at least one post assembly having a plurality of spatially-separated detent positions.

11. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the flap is coupled to the housing with at least one adjustable fastener for closely contacting the source-backing surface to the source-contact surface.

12. The assembly of claim 5, wherein the slot is positioned to permit the placement of a relatively short source document on edge on the channel wherein information to be scanned is aligned with at least a portion of the platen.

13. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the housing is configured to extend the channel from the source-contact surface when an operator adjusts the source-backing surface in relation to the source-contact surface to increase the width of the opening.

14. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the width of the proximal end of the channel increases over that portion of the channel that extends beyond the platen.

15. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the channel is coated with a material having a relatively low coefficient of friction.

16. A space-saving scanner assembly, comprising:

means for optically scanning and converting image data into a digital data representation of a source;

means for spatially adjusting a source to be scanned with the means for optical scanning; and

means for supporting the source along an edge of said source during a scanning operation.

17. The assembly of claim 16, wherein the source edge support means comprises a channel.

18. The assembly of claim 16, wherein the adjusting means comprises a slot.

19. The assembly of claim 16, wherein the adjusting means comprises a first inclined surface associated with a housing and a second inclined surface associated with a flap.

20. A method for saving space on a desktop, comprising:

providing an optical scanner having a housing, the housing having a substantially vertical source-contact surface with a channel extending therefrom, the vertical source-contact surface including a transparent platen portion, the channel adjacent to a lower edge of the transparent platen; and

providing a flap coupled to the source-contact surface, the flap having a source-backing surface substantially parallel to the source-contact surface of the housing, wherein the source-contact surface, the source-backing surface, and the channel form an opening for receiving an edge of a source to be scanned.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising:

inserting a leading edge of a source to be scanned into the opening formed by the source-contact surface, the flap, and the channel such that source is supported along an edge by the channel.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

spatially arranging the flap and the housing wherein pressure is applied to a non-scan surface of the source and the scan surface of the source closely contacts the platen.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising:

enabling the optical scanner.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising:

spatially arranging the flap and the housing wherein pressure is removed from the non-scan surface of the source.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

removing the source from the opening.